IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (*currently amended*) [[A]] <u>An auditory</u> navigational system ~~for sight impaired users~~
comprising:

<u>at</u> [[At]] least one <u>transmitting handheld device</u> ~~transcieving handset~~ with at least one button;

<u>at least one</u> [[A]] computer that receives signals from the at least one handheld device ~~by means of a wireless data network~~; and

<u>at</u> [[At]] least one audio beacon controlled by [[the]] <u>one of the</u> computer<u>s</u> ~~by means of a data network,~~ ~~that emits a sound as a result of a user actuating a button on the handset~~ where the
at least one beacon emits a sound as a result of a user actuating a button on the handheld
device, <u>such emitting audio beacon being selected by the user as a result of their interaction</u>
<u>with the receiving computer using the handheld device.</u>

2. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the emitted sound is stored in the
<u>emitting</u> audio beacon.

3. (*cancelled*)

4. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where [[the]] <u>such emitting</u> audio beacon
~~that emits the sound~~ is [[the]] <u>a</u> beacon at one location among a sequence of locations
determined by <u>one of</u> the <u>at least one</u> computer<u>s</u> to be a route to <u>the selected</u> [[a]] ~~destination~~
beacon.

5. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the audible volume of the emitted
sound is adjustable so that it is adjusted upward when the ambient noise surrounding the
<u>emitting</u> beacon increases from a nominal level or adjusted downward when the ambient
noise decreases from the nominal level.

6. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the <u>emitting</u> audio beacon does not emit a sound at the request of a second user when it is in the process of emitting a sound at the request of a first user.

7. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the <u>emitting audio</u> beacon emits a sound requested by a second user after a sound requested by a first user is completed when the request by the second user is received while the sound of the first user is being emitted.

8. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the <u>at least one</u> [[the]] computer<u>s</u> causes a~~ sequence of~~ <u>at least two </u>audio beacons to emit a sound <u>in sequence</u> and stores in computer memory an index representing the identity of the <u>audio</u> beacon that emitted a sound immediately prior to the user actuating the ~~handset~~ <u>handheld device</u> and before the next beacon in the sequence has emitted the sound.

9. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 further comprising at least one radio frequency identification device with a data network connection with <u>the at least one of</u> the computer<u>s</u>.

10. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 further comprising:
an electromagnetic detector that detects the user's presence in proximity to the detector;
a data network that connects the detector to <u>at least one of</u> the computer<u>s</u>.

11. (*original*) The system of Claim 1 where the audio beacon further comprises a DTMF activated relay.

12. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the handheld device is<u> comprised of</u> either a cellular telephone or a handheld ~~personal~~ computer.

13. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the at least one audio beacon further comprises a digital data memory device where at least one sound is stored as digital data.

14. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 further comprising a data output connected to the at least one audio beacon that causes a device connected to such output to perform a function referenced by commands encoded as data output by the beacon.

15 . (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where instead of actuation by pressing a button, the handheld device actuation is accomplished by spoken voice into a [[the]] microphone.

16. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 [[16]] where, the sound is emitted when the user voices a command into a [[the]] microphone.

17. (*original*) The system of Claim 1 where the handheld device further comprises a voice recognition system.

18. (*original*) The system of Claim 1 where the handheld device further comprises a text to speech capability.

19. (*currently amended*) A method of providing [[a]] an auditory navigational guide to a person comprising the steps of:
> receiving from a user's handheld device an indication of a selected destination;
> Determining the selected destination of the user;
> receiving Receiving a request to produce a cue sound;
> emitting the cue Emitting [[a]] sound from an audio beacon located in proximity
to the desired selected destination.

20. (*currently amended*) The method of Claim 19 [[20]] where the emitting step comprises:

[[D]] determining the approximate location of the user;

[[D]] determining the next audio beacon among a sequence of audio beacons corresponding to a ~~step~~ route to the selected destination from the approximate location.

[[E]] emitting a sound from the next audio beacon.

21. (*currently amended*) The ~~system~~ method of Claim 19 [[20]] or 20 [[21]] where the handheld device outputs a verbal description of at least one aspect regarding the route to the emitting beacon or selected destination.

22. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 further comprising a data memory located in one of the computers wherein the substantially shortest usable route between one pair of the at least one audio beacons is stored in the form of a sequence of indices corresponding to the sequence of audio beacons that lie closest to the substantially shortest usable route ~~path~~ between the pair of audio beacons.

23. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the at least one computer is located in a central location and controls the audio beacons in one or more remote locations.

24. (*currently amended*) The system according to Claim 1 where the emitting audio beacon is located in close proximity to the pedestrian entrance to a train, a bus, an escalator, an elevator, a hallway, a stairwell, a pedestrian line defined by a crowd control device, the curbside of a roadway crosswalk, the entryway to a library stack.

25. (*currently amended*) The system of Claim 1 where the approximate locations of the audio beacons are stored in a data memory accessed by the at least one computer.

26. (*currently amended*) The method of Claim 19 [[20]] where the determining step comprises the operation of an interactive menu where choices are presented as audio output from ~~through~~ the handheld device ~~handset~~ and selections by the user are made ~~either~~ by

pressing ~~the handset~~ a key pad <u>on the handheld device.</u> ~~or by speaking verbal commands input into the a handset microphone connected to the handheld device~~.

27. (*currently amended*)   The method of Claim <u>26</u> [[27]] where the choices include selection by the user of at least one of a<u>n</u> airplane flight, bus line, bus line destination, train line, train line destination, office location, exhibit location, floor level, stairwell, elevator, crowd line, ticket line<u>.</u> [[,]]

28. (*new claim*)   The method of Claim 19 where the determining step comprises the operation of an interactive menu where choices are presented as audio output through the handheld device and selections by the user are made by speaking verbal commands into a microphone operatively integrated with the handheld device.

29. (*new claim*)   The method of Claim 28 where the choices include selection by the user of at least one of a<u>n</u> airplane flight, bus line, bus line destination, train line, train line destination, office location, exhibit location, floor level, stairwell, elevator, crowd line, ticket line.

30. *(new claim)*   The system of Claim 1 or Claim 16 where the at least one audio beacons have a text to speech capability.